

THE TRANSFORMATION OF STUDENT SERVICES UNDER THE NSHE INTEGRATE PROJECT

February 28, 2007

VISION

The new **Student Services Module (SSM)** for the iNtegrate Project will transform how and when students communicate with the colleges and universities of the Nevada System of Higher Education and how faculty and staff conduct the necessary business of meeting students' needs for accurate information, timely decisions, and informed choices that lead to student success.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles support the Vision of the SSM and should guide the decisions related to implementation. When limited resources necessitate choices among desired features, priorities can be established by the iNtegrate Student Affairs Work Group based on these principles.

We propose that all of these broad principles be followed to guide implementation decisions. However, in a real world, we know we may not be able to create a complete module on the day it goes live. As decisions are required during the implementation of the SSM by the project working group, they should be made

- (a) in a timely manner with a goal of keeping this project moving forward,*
- (b) with a sense of urgency to make sure antiquated processes are replaced,*
- (b) with a focus on best serving students,*
- (c) based on the following principles, and*
- (d) in consultation with institutional students, faculty, and staff.*

Student Services – Student Perspective

1. Service to the student as the consumer of our educational product will guide the construction and design of the Student Services Module (SSM).
2. All transactions related to students, classes, and academic records will be integrated into the new SSM. These transactions will be easily accessible and will enable students to conduct most business with the NSHE institutions on line. Transactions will be user-guided interactive processes allowing or involving the exchange of information or instructions between the student and the computer.
3. There will be “24/7” real-time access for all users.

4. A personalized, single point of access to information, transactions, and applications for students, faculty and staff, according to their roles and preferences will be provided.
5. Navigation through the SSM must be intuitive as well as aesthetically pleasing. The technologies and transactions that students use most often will be “up front” at the site of entry: making navigation convenient for students. The SSM will be designed to guide students to successful completion of their academic goals.
6. Student service functions, including course registration, payment of fees, and financial aid, will be student-friendly and better serve students by streamlining processes and eliminating duplicate efforts, supporting seamless transfer across the NSHE, and improving communication between faculty, staff, and students.
7. There will be a single universal identity for all NSHE students, including the creation of a single ID that will be used by all institutions in transactions for a particular individual.
8. The SSM will be designed to serve the needs of all students, including students with disabilities, international students, students taking non-credit courses, and nontraditional students.
9. Similarities and differences in institutional policies and procedures will be addressed during implementation and the SSM will be designed to lessen the impact of differences on students, faculty, and staff. Students will be informed as soon as possible of the differences that they may encounter when co-enrolling, transferring, or registering for continuing education, extended studies, or distance education courses.

Student Services – Faculty and Staff Perspective

10. The SSM will maximize meeting the needs of institutions within a context of the necessity to preserve and promote a common set of transactions and processes throughout the NSHE.
11. The SSM will be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the missions of different types of institutions within NSHE.
12. The SSM will change practice through technological innovation and support. Process re-engineering and electronic work flow will result in greater efficiencies and better services, and the SSM will allow faculty and staff to redeploy resources to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness.
13. If particular Board of Regents’ policies prevent effective implementation of a well-functioning SSM, those policies will be re-examined and potential changes presented to the Board of Regents for consideration.

14. Effective advising of students by faculty and staff will be enhanced by instant access to correct information on individual students, backup support for information related to degree and program requirements, NSHE transfer information, and other data as needed for proper academic advisement.
15. The SSM will support academic and institutional planning to better meet students' needs.
16. Transition planning and training will help faculty and staff to understand and utilize the full potential of this product.

DATA

17. All common data elements and data definitions will be established and maintained for the purposes of developing higher education policies and institutional budgets, measuring institutional and NSHE performance for accountability purposes, tracking students across the NSHE, and longitudinal studies of students to enhance academic performance.
18. Data will be shared across functional areas.
19. Data will support students across institutional boundaries.
20. Meaningful, consistent, and timely data will be available to end users on each institutional campus, and effective data reporting tools will be in place to improve services to students and to support better management decisions.

VALUE ADDED STUDENT SERVICES AND ACADEMIC FUNCTIONS

The following list provides a more detailed Vision of what the Student Services Module (SSM) of the iNtegrate Project would ideally provide. This list is not created based on funds available or on vendor selected since this information is not yet known, but on those transactions and functions that would most assist NSHE students, faculty, and staff. Thus, this list indicates where we would like to be when the implementation is done if funds allow. The first scope of what is implemented may be considerably less, but the early implementation should not preclude NSHE from moving to the more advanced capabilities in the future.

- a. **Prospecting and Recruiting** Prompt electronic acknowledgement of all student inquiries and tracking of prospective students from initial point of contact to matriculation; information to students sent daily as needed; collection of data about what students want that is not offered (for future program development) and identification of selected groups of students for recruitment; access to students' test scores.

- b. **Admissions Applications** Expedited student application process; electronic notification to students of admission status, student ID and PIN number, email; and one student ID number for all NSHE institutions.
- c. **K12 & Transfer Transcript Import** Electronic importing and exporting of high school, NSHE institutional, and other postsecondary transcripts for high school graduates, transfer students, and graduate students; importation of transcript information directly into a degree audit reporting system.
- d. **Student Support Services** Excellent, accessible information on services and activities that support students throughout their academic career, including orientation, assessment, housing, student conduct, tutoring, supplemental instruction, TRIO, career services, etc.
- e. **Course Registration** Real-time, online, 24/7 add/drop/shop/change/audit capability including full wait listing functionality with electronic notification upon class placement and/or cancellation; detailed billing and payment with easy integration to third party tuition management software.
- f. **Grade Reporting** Faculty grade books on-line that support automated mid-semester and final grade reporting; electronic reminders to faculty with due dates of grade submissions; electronic signatures meeting all federal privacy and security standards for the assignment of class grades; uploading of grades automatically to students' academic history; provisions for grade changes accommodated through electronic work flow.
- g. **Financial Aid** Real time, 24/7 access to student financial data for students, faculty, and staff; the processing of student verifications streamlined by using workflow tools and images of student-submitted documentation; all communications handled via email and automated notifications; tight integration with external electronic financial aid processes to uniquely identify, authenticate and deliver personalized services to students.
- h. **Drop/Add** Reminders to students of drop/add and refund policy deadlines through regular student updates; confirmations of dropped classes generated to the student, the student's advisor and the financial aid office; requests for verifications of date last attended automatically generated to instructors for financial aid and return of Title IV funds compliance.
- i. **Degree Audit** Access to degree progress 24/7 with the ability to run "what if" scenarios for intended change of programs; access for prospective students to a degree audit report prior to admission to assist in the application and program selection process; planned courses functionality to determine how intended schedules might impact time to graduation; interfaces with reporting tools that enable decision makers to aggregate degree audit output data from students in order to determine how many class sections or courses need to be offered in any

- given semester; graduation audit to facilitate graduation evaluation and credit evaluation for multiple degrees, including in progress coursework.
- j. **Academic Advising** Semester by semester planning and "what if" scenarios to create educational plans for students; capability to plan for different variables, including multiple degrees, majors, times of completion, choice of courses, and graduation dates; integrated advising and registration information whereby courses recommended by advisor are posted as note or reminder in student online registration and contact notes provide documentation of student contact.
 - k. **Transcript Records** Information concerning transcript records readily available to students via a single point of access with data on the transcripts consistent with degree audit information and "real time" records. Additionally, official transcript requests made possible electronically.
 - l. **Course & Curriculum Management** Pre-, co-, and dual-requisite management where requisites (classes with specific sections, standing, test scores, GPA, grades, major) can be enforced with effective dating capabilities; ability to create/inactivate future courses in the present using effective dating; bi-directional communication capability with room scheduling software.
 - m. **Course & Room Scheduling** Capability to change and/or update class times, locations, titles, dates, credits and have these changes universally applied to all students enrolled in these classes; capability to automatically generate add/drop dates for modular classes when created; bi-directional communication capabilities with third party scheduling software.
 - n. **Multi-institutional course equivalencies and common courses** Common course numbering to assist students in a seamless transfer between NSHE institutions; no duplicated course information from institution to institution.
 - o. **Tuition and fee payments, fees for services and refunds** Real time 24/7 access to tuition and fee payments, fees for services, and refunds; automatic information to students regarding potential course purge followed by communication that they have been purged; unified billing system to cover all student billing transactions; ability for students to view bills from multiple institutions at one site if they are enrolled in more than one.
 - p. **Distance Education** Interface with learning management systems; information and coding of distance courses to include the flexibility to handle many sites and types of courses, making registration and tracking of enrollment for all corresponding sections seamless.
 - q. **International Students** Tools necessary to recruit and communicate with prospective international students; integration with third party systems and/or the tools necessary to track student academic progress and fulfill Federal reporting

- requirements (SEVIS); seamless integration of requirements specific to international students in relation to student records and student accounts.
- r. **Effective Reporting Tools** Reporting tools that are complex enough to drill down to extreme detail and track students across institutions while still simple enough, including standard pre-defined reports, so that the lay person is able to retrieve information on their own and on an ad hoc basis.
 - s. **Data Dictionary** Defined common data elements necessary for federal, state and Board of Regents reporting; element definitions created by institutions, NSHE System Administration and System Computing Services; common field values and value definitions used by institutions to enable data to be reported in a consistent manner *systemwide*.
 - t. **Universal ID** One unique student ID consistent across institutions and across information systems enabling *systemwide* reporting and tracking of students through NSHE institutions.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Much work remains to be done on the details related to the sharing of common implementation tasks and functions and the definition of the campus-specific ones. This broad general statement is offered as a commitment to begin that conversation and to think carefully about which operations can be fundamentally changed for the better by commonalities and which ones must be campus specific.

All institutions within NSHE strive to implement the strategic directions set by the Board of Regents through a wide range of similar functions as outlined in the Student Services module RFP. These include, but are not limited to the basic functions surrounding the recruitment, admission and enrollment of students; the awarding of financial aid and scholarships; the assessment and collection of fees; the advisement of students regarding satisfactory progress; the fulfillment of requirements for program completion; and the recording of grades, degrees and certificates through transcripts and diplomas. These essential common functions are achieved within the framework of each NSHE institution's specific mission. It is the differentiation of mission between the NSHE institutions that make possible the wealth of post-secondary opportunities open to the peoples of the state of Nevada. It is the responsibility of each institution to realize its specific mission. As a result, differences in the implementation of these commonalities occur.

While all institutions register students, each institution retains differing schedules of registration and payment activities, refund policies, and withdrawal from class deadlines. These specific schedules and policies reflect the mission, character and student population of each institution. While all institutions award financial aid and scholarships, flexible beginning and ending dates of specific instructional terms result in differential disbursement schedules. While all institutions provide advisement to students, each institution and program of study may retain its own set of satisfactory progress

requirements necessitated by a specific discipline or trade. While each institution verifies requirements for program completion, each institution does so in a manner that is in the best interest of the students it serves. While all institutions provide transcripts of record, specific transcript notations may differ among institutions as well as between programs of study within institutions.

All NSHE institutions have mission specific requirements that will require flexibility within the Student Service Module that will accommodate a wide range of educational options such as continuing education and community service, technical and vocational programs, liberal arts programs, professional programs, and graduate, medical and professional education.